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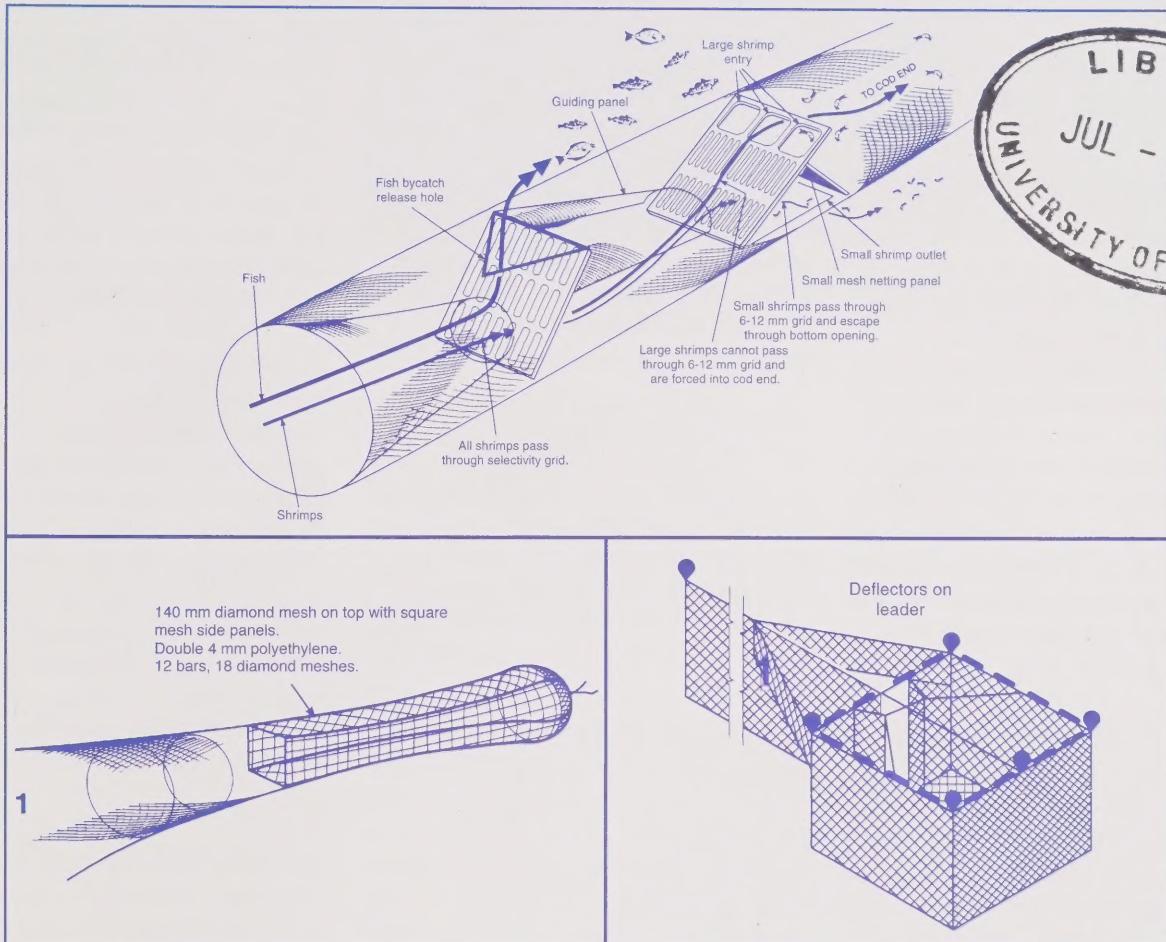
Responsible fisheries ; summary : Methods
of measuring fishing gear selectivity -
methodology manual and gear specific
protocols.

RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES

S U M M A R Y



METHODS OF MEASURING FISHING
GEAR SELECTIVITY –
METHODOLOGY MANUAL
AND GEAR SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS
FEBRUARY 1999



BACKGROUND

With the collapse of the Atlantic ground fisheries and the viability of other major stocks threatened, the future of Canadians fisheries looked bleak at the turn of the decade.

Challenged by these circumstances, major stakeholders in the industry, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans

(DFO) and the industry (individual fishers and their organizations), have committed to a rebuilding of the fishing industry as a sustainable and economically viable venture for present Canadians and a legacy for future generations of Canadians.

As part of this commitment, DFO is cooperating with industry to develop

strategies designed to build a promising and truly sustainable future for Canadian fisheries.

One such strategy is the development and practical application of selective gears and fishing practices that support viable and conservation-oriented fisheries.



Support for fishing gear selectivity experiments conducted under commercial conditions has been entrenched in the Principles and Guidelines that form part of the Canadian Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing Operations and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. As well, fishers support of and participation in selectivity research affords a real opportunity for fishers to become involved in the development of their industry.

SELECTIVITY PROJECTS

(using commercial vessels)

Development of Selectivity Manual

To facilitate industry's involvement in commercial testing, DFO commissioned the preparation of the manual entitled "*Methodology Manual: Measurement of Fishing Gear Selectivity*", first published in 1995.

Designed to assist fish harvesters and fisheries technicians in the planning, execution, analysis, and reporting of selectivity work, the Methodology Manual outlines the necessary steps involved in conducting size and species selectivity experiments under as close as possible to

normal commercial conditions. The many factors that must be considered when designing an experiment are reviewed with particular emphasis on the importance of obtaining an estimate of the total population of fish exposed to the gear and acceptable random sampling procedures.

Methods of measuring the selectivity of gillnets; longlines; traps, both baited and unbaited; and trawls are provided. These include covered codend, alternate haul, parallel haul, twin trawl, and trouser trawl methods, and inferential approaches.

Methods for analyzing data from selectivity trials are also provided along with case studies for fixed and mobile gears. These case studies provide a practical, hands-on approach to the measurement of selectivity.

Numerous fishers and fishers' organizations from across Canada, including those on the Pacific coast, the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and the freshwater lakes, have requested the Manual to assist them in planning and executing selectivity work. Those who have used the Manual extensively suggest that the

information on experimental design, choice of methodology, and data analysis is primarily generic. With their appetites whetted for practical commercial research, fishers have said it would be advantageous to establish gear-specific protocols for each major gear type that would include methodologies to be used.

Development of gear specific protocols

When the Atlantic cod fishery reopened on a very limited basis, and other fisheries not subject to a moratorium reopen in 1997, fishers were playing a lead role in conducting selectivity work with the intention of obtaining data to estimate exploitation rates and to test and assess alternate methods and modifications to traditional gears, making them more selective.

Responding to feedback on the Methodology Manual, DFO has further assisted fishers involved in selectivity trials by developing nine gear-specific protocols covering each major gear type. Based on the contents of the "*Methodology Manual: Measurement of Fishing Gear Selectivity*", these protocols outline procedures for carrying out selectivity experiments with cod traps, longlines, gillnets, and trawls under commercial operating conditions, ensuring that the results are valid and reliable.

Also addressed in these protocols are issues and concerns that have emerged as a result of experimental work carried out using the Methodology Manual as a resource. Examples of the types of issues that have emerged and how they are addressed in the protocol follow:

Allocation of Responsibility

Dealt with in the gear-specific protocols is the issue of allocating responsibility for the various components of the research. Those who have used the Methodology Manual suggest that even with the most carefully thought out work

Methodology Manual: Measurement of Fishing Gear Selectivity

Experimental Design:

Outlines the important aspects of an experiment that must be considered to ensure at-sea trials follow acceptable procedures.

Experimental Methods:

Describes the methodologies that can be used to conduct experimental work for both fixed and mobile gears

Analysis of Data:

Describes methods for analysing data from fixed and mobile gears that generate normal and S-shaped curves.

Reporting:

Describes how data obtained is to be reported.

Case Studies:

Provides demonstrations on new and traditional approaches to measuring the selectivity of fixed and mobile gears.

plan, unforeseeable situations occur during the conduct of an experiment that require a decision. Accordingly, there is a need to establish responsibility for each aspect of the experimental process. The protocol calls for a collaborative team approach consisting of a skipper, responsible for fishing activities; an onboard monitor, responsible for random sampling and data recording; and a project authority (ashore), responsible for all technical decisions.

Measuring Selectivity or Relative Selectivity

Recognizing that it may not be possible or even desirable to estimate a true measure of gear selectivity under all circumstances, those who have been involved in selectivity research suggest that the protocols address ways of obtaining not only a measure of selectivity but of relative selectivity.

Estimates of relative selectivity could, for example, allow researchers to compare a traditional gear to an experimental gear in terms of which gear catches a greater proportion of larger fish or which has less by-catch of non-targeted species or percent of juveniles of the targeted species.

Estimates of selectivity and relative selectivity provide commercial fishers with information that can be incorporated into the harvesting plans of individual fisheries, ensuring maximum selectivity of gears deployed. Accordingly, the protocol for each gear outlines how to complete experiments to measure selectivity and relative selectivity.

Estimating the Total Population of Fish

Estimating the total population of fish exposed to the gear can be problematic under commercial testing conditions.

Because of the nature of the catching process and factors associated with the area fished, the use of an otter trawl



Using the protocol for codtraps, fishers test a selectivity grid (50 mm bar spacings) in a cod trap. The project was funded by harvesters, the Fish Harvester's Resource Center, and the federal-provincial co-operation agreement (CAFID).

(generally used to obtain the total population of fish) as a control gear is more difficult when conducting selectivity experiments with fixed gears, particularly longlines and gillnets. Accordingly, gear-specific protocols provide guidelines for dealing with this issue.

To illustrate, the protocol for estimating the selectivity of gillnets specifies that when a small-mesh otter trawl of known selectivity can not be used, that selectivity curves can be obtained by comparing the catches from two or more gillnets, each having a slightly different mesh size. The actual estimate of selectivity is then calculated by applying Holt's technique, an inferential approach to data analysis that provides a measure of selectivity.

Obtaining a Random Sample

Often times vessels used in the commercial fishery are too small to accommodate proper measuring, sampling, and recording procedures. Vessels used in the cod trap fishery off Newfoundland are a good example.

Consequently, each protocol spells out several ways of obtaining a random sample, onboard the vessel or ashore, ensuring proper sampling, measuring, and recording of the catch.

The Methodology to be used

A critical issue when conducting at-sea trials is the choice of experimental method. Generally, more than one methodology can be used to complete experiments with a given gear type. The Manual describes five methods for measuring the selectivity of trawls. The method chosen depends on the size of the vessel needed (vessels range in size from 45 ft to more than 200 ft); the species being fished; the varying environmental and sea conditions encountered; and the cost of completing the trials using a particular method. For example, researchers may choose to use the alternate haul method because the methodology allows the achievement of stated objectives and because it is less expensive than conducting experiments using the parallel haul method that requires two vessels.

Recording of Data

The precise recording of data is essential to proper conduct of selectivity experiments. While certain data is collected and recorded regardless of gear type, other data must be collected and recorded only when using a particular type of gear.

For example, because the towing speed of a trawler can affect the geometry of the gear and therefore selectivity, tow speed must be recorded. However, vessel speed does not affect the selectivity of fixed gears such as cod traps and longlines; therefore, the speed of the vessel does not need to be recorded when measuring the selectivity of these gears. Each protocol specifies the minimum data requirements.

PROJECTS COMPLETED WITH GEAR-SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS

Before using the protocols developed for each specific gear type, the skipper, crew members, monitors, and any other persons involved in a selectivity project attend a one-day training seminar. At this seminar, the objectives of the selectivity work are reviewed; responsibilities of the team are discussed; and technical procedures, for example, random sampling are taught.

Several selectivity projects were completed in 1996-97 using gear-specific protocols.

Example 1. Gulf of St. Lawrence groundfish fishery - mixed cod and flatfish .

Recognizing the need to reduce the by-catch of juvenile fish, fishers (in the NAFO-4T area) proposed conducting a series of selective experiments designed to assess the use of different codends in releasing small cod and plaice (flatfish) encountered in mixed populations. After reviewing the gear-specific protocols for trawls, the alternate haul methodology

was chosen. Two commercial vessels - dragger (M/V Miss Lameque) and a Scottish seiner (M/V Patrice R) were commissioned for the study.

Experimental gears tested were four standard codends, made from different sizes/shapes of mesh and two new codends incorporating both square and diamond mesh.

Example 2. Cod trap selectivity.

Recognizing the need for selective gears that would reduce the high levels of small fish caught in codtraps and the need to ensure that escaping fish survived, fishers in Newfoundland purposed experiments to evaluate selective gear such as square mesh panels and rigid grids installed in the back panels of codtraps. The gear-specific protocol for codtraps was used with strict adherence to the technical procedures and data collection techniques described.

Example 3. Beam trawls in the B.C. Shrimp Fishery

Fishers concerned with the incidental by-catch of juvenile shrimp and untargeted species proposed a series of controlled shrimp beam trawls experiments.

Using the protocol for trawls - trouser trawl method, experiments were conducted. Tested was a standard beam trawl split by a vertical panel (11m) to prevent migration across the panel that had two codends (experimental and control) attached, one on each side of the panel.

Despite the comprehensive nature of the experimental process, difficulties were encountered in all three experimental selectivity projects. In particular, the logistics of onboard sampling of the catch and the temptation to comprise the standards defined in the protocols clearly emerged as an issue.

Those involved in the research; however, say the experience was an invaluable one, helping them understand the need for protocols and the importance of strictly adhering to the steps and procedures outlined in each.

CONCLUSION

The fishing industry and government, committed to a shared responsibility for fisheries management, are working cooperatively to develop and implement practical conservation-oriented strategies. As selectivity research is completed and results implemented, more and more gears will be used that select fish at optimal size with minimal by-catch. Deployment of these selective gears will indeed help industry and government achieve the goal of sustainable and economically viable Canadian fisheries.

POINTS OF CONTACT

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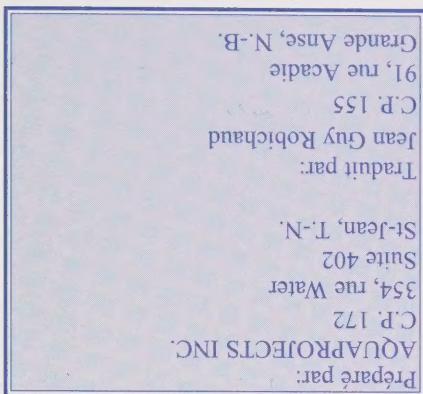
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PERSONNE RESSOURCE

Par exemple, comme la vitesse de trait d'un chalutier peut modifier la géométrie de l'en-
gin, donc la sélectivité, on doit émergister la
vitesse de trait. Par contre, la vitesse d'un fixe comme les nasses à morue et les plan-
tires; conséquemment, il est multiple d'engre-
gues; certains engins. Chaque protocole
sélectionne la vitesse du bateau si l'on mesure la
spécificité des engins de donnees minimisum.

L'ensemble des données est essentiel à la bonne conduite des expériences de sélection. Quoique certaines données soient recueillies et enregistrées sans égard au type d'enquête, d'autres données doivent être recueillies et enregistrées uniquement lorsqu'on utilise un type d'enquête donnée.

des conditions marines et environnementales reconnues; et du coût du parachevement des essais en utilisant une méthode donnée. Par exemple, les chercheurs peuvent opter pour la méthode de traits en alternance, car cette méthode permet d'atteindre les objectifs énoncés et elle est moins coûteuse que celle des traits parallèles où il faut détourner le bateau.

Qui suit le protocole pour les nasses à morue, des pêcheurs versifiés à la sélectivité d'une grille (50 mm d'espace entre les barreaux) dans une nasse à morue. Ce projet a été financé par les pêcheurs, FISH Harvesters Resource Center et l'Accord de coopération fédérale-provinciale (CAGF).



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Estimer la population totale de poisson

Souvent les nattes utilisées dans la pêche commerciale sont trop petits pour accorder les procédures adéquates de mesure, d'échantillonnage et d'engagement. Un bon exemple de cela, ce sont les nattes utilisées dans la pêche aux nasses à mure au large de Terre-Neuve.

Obtenir un échantillon aléatoire est une tâche qui nécessite de faire des essais avec différentes tailles de nattes et de mesurer la taille de chaque poisson obtenu. Cependant, chaque protocole enonce plusieurs façons d'obtenir un échantillon aléatoire, à bord du navire ou à terre, en assurant un bon échantillonnage, mesure et enregistrement des prises.

La méthodologie à utiliser

Une question critique lors de la réalisation d'essai en mer, c'est le choix de la méthode expérimentale. De fait on génère, on peut utiliser plus d'une méthode pour compléter les expériences avec un type donné d'engin. Le manuel décrit ci-dessous pour mesurer les sélections dépend de la taille du navire et la sélectivité des charots. La méthode nécessaire (leur taille varie de 45 pi. à 200 pi.); des espèces péchées; des draps différents. Ensuite on calcule l'estimation de prises de deux fillets marlins sur deux courbes de sélectivité en com-

Dans des conditions d'essai commerciales, estimer la population totale de poisson expose à l'engin peut s'avérer problématique. Dans des conditions d'essai commerciales, estimer la population totale de poisson expose à l'engin peut s'avérer problématique. La capture et des facteurs associés à la zone de capture tenu de la nature du processus de génération, l'utilisation d'un chalut à panneaux génère également utilise pour obtenir la population totale de poisson) comme engin témoignage des sélections difficiles si l'on réalise une expé- surtout avec les planaires et les filets mail- ants. Conséquemment, les protocoles spéci- que si sélectivité des filets marlins précise que si on ne peut pas utiliser un petit chalut à pan- neaux dont la sélectivité est connue, on peut déterminer les courbes de sélectivité en com-

Par exemple, le protocole pour estimer la capture tenu de la nature du processus de génération, l'utilisation d'un chalut à panneaux génère également utilise pour obtenir la population totale de poisson) comme engin témoignage des sélections difficiles si l'on réalise une expé- surtout avec les planaires et les filets mail- ants. Conséquemment, les protocoles spéci- que si sélectivité des filets marlins précise que si on ne peut pas utiliser un petit chalut à pan- neaux dont la sélectivité est connue, on peut déterminer les courbes de sélectivité en com-

relative pour la sélectivité ou la sélectivité mesurer la sélectivité que ce n'est peut-être pas possible ou même souhaitable d'estimer la mesure exacte de la sélectivité des enigmes en toutes circonstances, les personnes ayant partagé nos résultats obtenu non seulement une mesure de sélectivité, mais aussi une sélectivité relative pourraient permettre aux chercheurs de comparer un engin classique à un engin plus grande proportion de gros possesseurs ou ledvel à le moins de prises accessoires d'espèces non cibles ou le plus rare pour centage de juvéniles des espèces cibles.

Les estimations de sélectivité est de sélectiv-ité relative offre un peu différent aux pêcheurs comme- ciaux une information qu'ils peuvent micro-poser dans leurs plans de récolte des pêches individuelles, en assurant le maximum de sélectivité des employés.

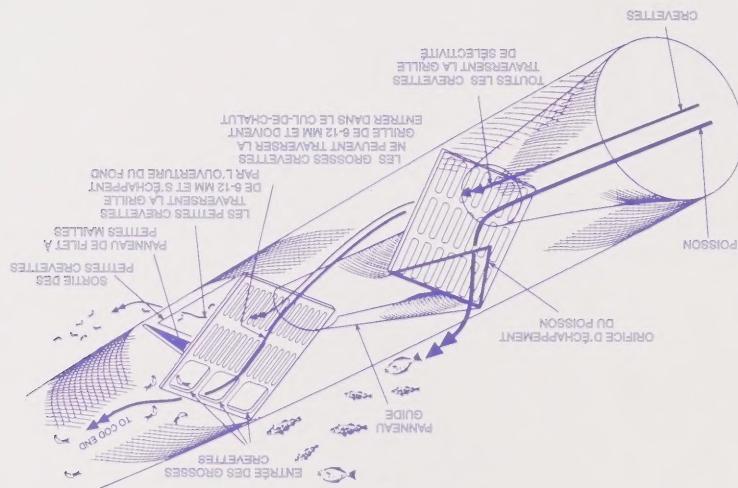
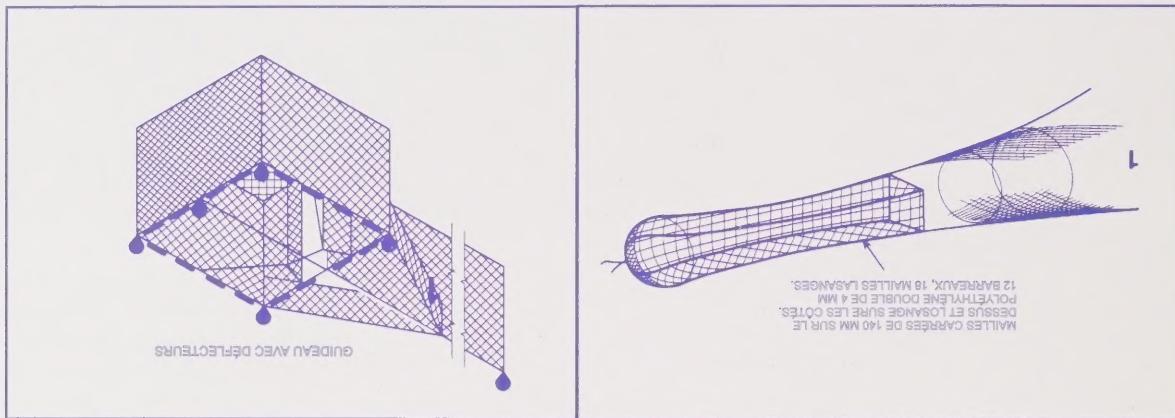
Concernant le protocole pour chaque ensemble, le protocole pour la sélectivité consiste spécifiquement à mesurer la sélectivité de chaque ensemble de pêcheur.

L'application des stratégies vise le développement et l'application pratique de méthodes sélectives qui favorisent des peccaires variables axées sur la conservation.

Les stratégies visent à réduire les pertes de peccaires dans les situations de chasse commerciale à être encadrée dans les principes et les lignes directrices que l'on retrouve dans le Code de conduite canadien.

Au tourment de la décence, vu l'effon-
drement de la peche au poisson de
fond de l'Atlantique et la vitalité
menace des autres grands stocks de poisson,
l'avent des pêches canadiennes paraissait
très moins. Stimulés par cette conjoncture,
les pêcheurs interviennent de l'industrie,
ministre de Pêches et Océans (MPO) et
l'industrie (organisations et pêcheurs indi-
viduels) se sont engagé à rebâtir l'industrie

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